

I am an Australian Naturopathic practitioner passionate about the health and well-being of my community. I work with clients on reducing their modifiable risk factors to all sorts of chronic diseases and conditions. The premise of my work is in health reeducation and prevention. We often discuss being able to make an informed choice about what goes into our body and these proposed laws will take away the ability for our community to do so. It strips the individual of their bodily autonomy and as a health professional who advocates for individuals to take responsibility over their health, this does not sit well with me.

I therefore strongly oppose changes to the Food Code that would allow a wide range of GM foods, made using novel methods that have scant history of safe use, to be sold without safety assessment or labelling. These would include meat and milk from some genetically modified animals and substances like vanilla and stevia produced by genetically modified microbes in factory vats. These changes would undermine FSANZ's key responsibilities to ensure food safety and our right to know what is in our food.

Gene editing techniques have been found to make genetic changes that could never occur in nature and to result in widespread genetic damage that often goes undetected by GM developers.

The proposed changes would make Australia one of very few countries in the world to allow genetically modified animal products into our food chain with no regulation or labelling. This would put us at odds with our international trading partners, which FSANZ admits “may have a significant impact on trade”. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, an international agreement signed by 166 governments worldwide, and the UN’s food standards body Codex Alimentarius agree that all GM techniques differ from conventional breeding and that pre-market safety assessments are essential before GM organisms are used in food.

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deregulate new and emerging GM techniques and their food products, which pose new and unassessed risks, is completely unacceptable.

Thank you for taking my well-founded and informed concerns into consideration.

Yours sincerely,

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